

E 1178

PSALMS, &c.

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ST. JAMES'S.

It would certainly be a great gratification to the curiosity of learning, and a most delightful indulgence to the imagination, which loves to transfer itself into the remotest times ; if we could, by any means, attain to read and understand the Psalms of David, as they were read and understood and recited by the Minstrels and Singers of his own time. But for a Christian, seeking only his own edification, it is surely more profitable to meditate upon them as they were expounded by our Saviour and his Apostles, in their application to his own person and ministry, and to the events of his Church. That many of these events are still future, has been the opinion of the best Theologians of our Church (as for instance Bishops Horne and Horsley); that they cannot be far distant, is the apprehension of many learned and devout persons now living; to invest the awful images of antient prophecy, contained in the Psalms appropriated to our principal festivals, in suitable forms of austere and simple poetry, has been the attempt of the unworthy Author.

NOTE.

Leaves are metaphorically used to signify speech, language.

PSALM I.

BLESSED is He—the man that hath not walk'd
 In the counsel of the reprobate,—nor talk'd
 With Sinners—in the broad and beaten way :
 Nor, with unsanctified and haughty sway
 Throned in the magisterial chair,—presum'd
 To censure and condemn—what God hath doom'd.
 But his delight is in that blessed Law,
 To find it holy, pure, and free from flaw ;
 His task,—his recreation,—his delight,
 Both Even, and Morn,—and in the depths of Night—
 So shall he prosper,—flourishing and free,
 Like to the natural or the mystic tree,
 Fast by the living waters ;—bringing forth
 In his due season fruits of kindly worth,
 Alms and oblations ;—while his very leaf *
 Shall whisper of repentance and belief
 Mov'd by the Spirit of heav'n, and vocal made,
 A living tongue,—it shall not fall nor fade.

Not so the ungodly—when the winds arise
 To scatter their inventions worldly wise,
 Wafted in wild opinion to and fro,
 With their atomic chaff,—away they go.—
 Therefore,—the curious spirits—idly bold,
 Rash—sinful,—nsolent,—shall stand controul'd,
 With their exploded postulates uncouth,
 In the firm Synod of eternal Truth.

The Lord is over all,—to mark and know
 The spirit and heart and mind of all below,
 He 'stablishes and confirms the good,—and ever
 Confounds the unrighteous in their vain endeavour.

PSALM II.

EASTER DAY.

WHY do the nations rage and storm in vain
 With insurrection furious and profane ;
 And Lo,—the Monarchs of the world are met !
 Their ranks are muster'd, and their council set ;
 Princes and people ;—all with one accord
 United in revolt against their Lord ;
 Against the Lord, and his anointed Son ;
 The purpose and design is ever one ;
 Whether tyrannic, or tumultuous,—still
 Enthroning earthly Wisdom, Power and Will :
 The last prerogative of human pride
 Claim'd and avow'd,—to cast the bonds aside
 Which fetter human action ;—to be free
 From Him the Almighty Eternal Enemy !
 “ Come—let us break the chain, and rend away”
 “ These links of mental slavery”—Thus they say.—
 He that abides in Heav'n,—surveys awhile
 Their hideous uproar, with an awful smile ;
 Till wrath divine,—long slumbering and suppress'd,
 Rouses at length,—and each rebellious breast

Quell'd and appall'd,—attends the vast decree
 Vouch'd in a voice of angry majesty.
 ' Yet shall He reign,—and He shall rule ye still
 ' Anointed and enthron'd on Sion's hill.
 He comes !—' I come the Teacher and the King,
 ' The Lawgiver ; Jehovah's word I bring ;
 ' He saith to me,'—" Mine only Son ! this day
 " Begotten, avow'd and born ; demand, and say ;
 " Ask and obtain thy priviledge of birth ;
 " All tribes and tongues, and every realm of earth !
 " Thou shalt controul them with the Rule of Right ;
 " As with an iron rod ; to rive and smite
 " The reprobate ; and like the potter's ware
 " Scatter asunder Empires here and there."
 Therefore be timely wise, O ye the Chief
 Of earthly powers !—Obedience and Belief
 May yet avail you ; but the time is brief ;—
 The warning is gone forth ;—the event is near ;
 Be wise and learned ;—Serve the Lord in fear !
 Princes and Kings of earth salute the Son
 With reverence, ere the tempest is begun ;
 The storm of fiery wrath ; whose angry blaze
 May snatch you wandering in forbidden ways ;
 If it be rous'd and kindled ; bless'd are all
 That with a trembling hope await the call.

PSALM XXI.

ASCENSION.

HE shall rejoice O Lord our rightful King,
 Exulting in thy succour, conquering
 The eternal enemy with Thy strength and aid.
 —Sin Death and Sorrow and Pain are captive made—
 —His heart's desire thou grantest him—the scope
 Of every supplication prayer and hope !
 With bounty, and love, and favor overflowing,
 With blessing thou preventest him ; bestowing
 On his anointed head, the regal ring
 Incòrruptible, as Conqueror Priest and King !
 The gold thereof is perfect ; purified
 Tormented in the furnace, prov'd and tried.

Life was the boon he sought ; yet not to live
 Alone ; but life eternal didst thou give :
 Great is his glory and praise, atchiev'd at length
 In Thy salvation, with thy power and strength.
 Thy countenance shall gladden him ; and display
 A second self ; with delegated sway
 Co-ordinate ; a fountain, and a store,
 Of Mercy, and Hope, and Grace for evermore,

For all the nations ! For his faith was tried ;
 For that his trust in Thee was testified ;
 Thy mercy shall maintain him on the throne,
 Time without end, unshaken and alone !

King ! Conqueror !—in thy wrath thou shalt arise
 And thy right hand shall reach thine enemies
 With ready vengeance—as the flames and heat,
 That round the vaulted furnace rave and beat,
 Enkindling and devouring all within ;
 Thy judgments shall consume the sons of sin,
 The fuel of wrath, outrageous, fiery, rife,
 With inextinguishable fury and strife
 Kindled to self destruction ; branch and root
 Thou shalt eradicate them !—seed and fruit
 Exterminated !—neither name nor place
 Left upon earth—nor memory, nor trace !—
 For why ? the malice of their hearts was bent
 Against Thy kingdom and name ;—The vain intent
 Is baffled, and recoils ;—Thy vengeful bow,
 Arm'd and uprais'd, is visible below !—
 Stunn'd and amaz'd, the thunder of the string,
 Strikes on their ear, Thy shafts are on the wing !
 O Lord our succour in that fearful hour
 Exalt Thyself in Thine own strength and Power ;
 So shall we praise Thy blessed name, and sing
 Our Conqueror and Deliverer, Lord and King.

PSALM XXII.

GOOD FRIDAY.

My God, my God, look on me ! why dost thou
 In agony and distress—forsake me now,
 Forlorn of help from thee ?—my daily cry
 Goes up before thy throne, O Lord, most high !
 Incessant,—instant,—from the dawn of light,
 And in the restless watches of the night :
 But Thou remainest, stedfast, holy, pure,
 Righteous, unchanged, and Thy decrees endure
 Eternally pre-destin'd truly and well,
 O Thou, the glory and praise of Israel !
 Our Fathers hop'd in Thee ; they cried and prayed
 For help ; and Thou didst grant them present aid ;
 They trusted and were holpen ;—as for me
 A worm and not a man—the last degree
 Of deep debasement, ignominy, and scorn,
 Oppresses me overwhelm'd and overborn—
 An outcast of the people, a mark, a stock
 For vulgar tongues and lips, to taunt and mock ;
 Saying, “ He trusted in his God to save him,
 “ Let God then interpose, if God will have him”—

NOTES.

* A race of animals, clean according to the Law, but of a savage and violent nature. The Jewish Rulers.

† The unclean dogs the Roman soldiers—of Gentile race.

Yes—Thou art He—that from my mother's womb
 Deliveredst me to light,—my trust,—on whom
 Whilst laid at rest upon the nursing breast,
 My thoughts and hopes were daily and hourly dwelling :
 Father and Lord in mercy and might excelling,
 Whose glory and praise my lips were ever telling,
 Leave me not here abandon'd and alone ;
 For trouble is hard at hand, and help is none !

The bestial herd* of Basan close me round,
 In boisterous outrage, with a savage sound
 Of rage and outcry, like the lion's howl,
 And eyes and gestures eager fierce and foul—
 And there I stand amongst them !—silent, slow,
 Weak as the very water ; faint and low ;
 My bones are out of joint ; my heart within
 Melts as the wax ; my lips and tongue begin
 To shrivel and wither with the parching breath—
 And thou shalt bring me to the dust of death !—
 The bloody dogs;† the unclean are in the croud !
 With the hypocritic Elders stern and proud—
 My feet and hands are pierc'd, and every bone
 Naked and bare, and counted one by one !
 In empty wonderment they gather round,
 Gazing upon me, watching every wound !—
 My garments are shar'd out—my vest unrent
 Stak'd as a prize, with ribald merriment !—
 But be not Thou far from me, O God my strength !
 Father and Lord ! incline thine ear at length—

Haste Thee to help me ; save my soul from scath
 Of fiendish rage ; and thine appointed wrath,
 The sword of Eden brandish'd early and long !—
 So shall I praise Thee with a joyful song
 Of victory and redemption ; and proclaim
 Thy justice and Thy mercies and Thy name
 Amongst the brethren—Ye that fear the Lord !
 Sons of the chosen seed ! with one accord
 Magnify and praise his name, with love and awe !
 Sons of the covenant and of the law !
 Children of Jacob and of Israel !
 For ye can witness well,—that he the Lord
 Hath not abhorr'd,—nor shunn'd the deep infliction,
 That dreadful interdiction undergoing,
 His tears in anguish flowing, and his cry
 Were heard and seen on high ; the Almighty face
 Was turn'd to pity and grace,—and pardon given,
 And ratified in heaven !—A louder voice
 Shall summon to rejoice, a congregation
 From many a tribe and nation ; wider far ;
 From where the appointed star
 Leads forth the mystic eastern Sages hoar ;
 E'en to the silent, shady, western shore ;
 The guests are marshall'd, and the banquet spread,
 With heavenly wine and bread—The bread of life !
 Without restraint or strife, or fear, or sadness,
 In singleness of heart, with love and gladness ;
 A company which death shall not dissever—
 They share the food which leads to life for ever ;

Lastly, the extremest tribes and every race
 Of the World's utmost space,
 Spelling aright,—the words of truth and light
 Through dark confus'd tradition long abus'd,
 Shall turn anew ;—to recollect the true
 Saviour—and Sacrifice,—and Child of Heaven,
 —The great primæval Hope and Promise given !

The Lord is ruler ; every Realm of earth
 His heritage of birth, is claim'd and held
 Subdued and quell'd,—beneath his awful sway ;
 Princes and kings obey ; the noble and great
 Sages and Chiefs of State, with humble cheer
 Attend the table in fear ; or serve and wait :
 Bashful and late, the sad rejected Seed,
 From guilt and error freed, return at length ;
 To be renew'd in strength, a mighty nation ;
 Again accounted as a generation,
 Enroll'd and register'd before the Lord,
 Upon the great record ;—to testify
 Of the Most High ; the deeds which he hath done ;
 Pardon and grace with mighty struggles won,
 And glory and rule ordain'd ; for him the anointed
 Amidst a race pre-destin'd and appointed.

PSALM XLV.

CHRISTMAS DAY.

My thoughts burst forth, even as a boiling spring ;
 As a full flowing course of ready writing ;
 From the deep source inditing,
 The glory and praise of our anointed King :

Thy form, O King ! is fairer, and thy face,
 Than the degraded, earthly, fallen Race ;
 Thy lips are full of Wisdom, Truth, and Grace ;
 For He, the Lord hath blessed thee for ever.
 Gird and prepare thee ; for the great endeavour ;
 Gird and prepare, the sword upon thy thigh,
 O Thou Most High !

With glory and majesty
 Ride prosperously forth ; with pity and ruth,
 Justice and Mercy, Righteousness and Truth,

The strength of thy right hand shall counsel thee ;
 Framing the final Covenant and Law,
 The Mystic Bow ; the work of wonder and awe,
 Which hands almighty alone, can bend and draw.

From the tremendous string
 What fearful echoes ring,
 Touches and tones of the celestial weapon :
 To those that gather round,
 Thy faithful followers found,
 With no discordant sound they rise and deepen :
 While through the world are seen
 The winged vollies keen,
 Shattering its frail defences, piercing, rending,
 Incessant on the mingled host descending,
 A living shower of flame, each fiery dart
 Sped with unerring aim, to search the reins and heart.

Thy throne, O God ! for ever and for ever,
 Is fixt—nor years, nor earthly time, shall sever
 The sceptre from thy grasp—Our King our God !
 Just is thy sceptre, righteous is thy rod !
 For in thy secret heart, and inmost sense,
 Hatred of sin, deep hatred, and intense
 Was prov'd in shame, and agony, and distress
 Triumphant in the zeal of righteousness.

Therefore even he thy God, with regal unction
 Of grace and gladness, to thy rightful function
 Hath raised thee, with supreme investiture—
 Anointed, consecrated, holy, pure,
 Inaugurate in perfect majesty ;
 A visible earthly present Deity !

From the rich unguent shed
 Upon thy sacred head,
 A wide perfume is spread—thy robes of state
 Waft odours, that proclaim
 From whence the tribute came ;
 In just obedience from the wise and great,
 Proud halls, and ivory domes of Eastern kings,
 Have sent their precious things,
 To gladden thee with homage and adore ;
 Myrrh, nard, and cassia from the spicy shore ;
 Such gifts as sooth'd thine infant heart before.

Daughters of Kings, of comely garb and hue,
 Stand in attendance due—Thy Bride and Queen
 Pre-eminent is seen, in stately vesture,
 In stature, form, and mien, in princely gesture,
 And comeliness of look surpassing all ;
 Within the regal hall preferr'd to stand,
 At thy right hand, distinct in rich array,
 Rich with the gold of Ophir, purified,
 Refin'd, and fully tried with hard assay.

Hear and attend, O Daughter ! Bride ! and Queen !
 Mark and attend !—forget what thou hast been ;
 Thy name, thy nation, and thy father's house,
 Thy customary vows, and wonted duty ;
 So shall the king have pleasure in thy beauty :
 Him shalt thou worship, honour'd and ador'd
 With other rites, thy Saviour and thy Lord !

Yet She too with her offering shall be seen,
 The tributary Queen, Daughter of Tyre ;
 That with her ample hire, and worldly dower ;
 Sagacious of the coming hour, had wrought ;
 And pearls of price with thrifty purchase bought ;
 And plac'd with wary trust, her wealthy store,
 Where neither moth nor rust corrupt for evermore.

Behold in royal pride
 'The glorious happy bride,
 In woven gold magnificently drest ;
 Her gorgeous outer robe and inner vest
 With mystic forms imprest ;
 Forms which the painful needle long had wrought,
 With subtle labour to perfection brought.

Yet see with livelier air
 Her young companions fair,
 Harmless and joyous, innocent of care,

Fearless of fraud or guile, guiltless of malice,
 With sportive easy cheer, and airy sallies,
 They pass the court, and enter at the Palace ;
 A fair approval meeting ;
 Applauded, and receiv'd with kindly greeting.

Think, then, no more of thine ancestral glory,
 The Sages and the Saints of ancient story,
 Prophets and Kings—look to the future race,
 Ordained to nobler things—A wider space
 Of Empire and command, in other times,
 Stretching in ample climes unknown before.

For me, Thy Name and praise for evermore
 Shall be my theme—a song for future days,
 When thy supreme and undivided claim
 Of Empire every realm of earth shall bless
 And magnify and confess Thy mighty name.

PSALM LXVIII.

WHIT-SUNDAY.

LET God arise !

And let his enemies

Be scattered and disperst !

The unrighteous, reprobate, profane, accurst !

Let them that hate him flee before His face ;

As when the winds of Heaven, with easy chace

Pursue the smoky blot that taints the sky —

(In vain aspiring high

Rising and reeking from this earthly spot)

The feeble fumes that waver and dissever,

Vanish at once away dissolv'd for ever ;

Or as the mass of wax within the fire

Sinks shapeless and dissolv'd, thy fervent ire,

Shall melt their hearts with horror and dismay :

So shall they perish, shrink and waste away ;

The righteous shall behold it, and rejoice

Before the Lord, with cheerful heart and voice :

Praise ye the Lord in his ineffable name

Jah ; the maintainer of this earthly frame ;

Ruling and riding on the wheeling sphere
 Like a strong horseman ; curbing its career,
 Bound thro' the barren empty tracts of space ;
 Thy providence and power shall also trace
 A path before Thee thro' the tracts of time :
 And marshal forth the eventful march sublime,
 Pacing the void of blank futurity—
 God shall accomplish it. The Father He
 Of all the destitute ; to save and bless
 The widows, the forlorn, the fatherless,
 The solitary souls inur'd to chains
 Planting them forth among the pleasant plains
 To dwell in happy families and tribes ;
 But other destiny and abode prescribes
 For the rebellious, barren, hard and bare,
 With hunger and cold, with scanty and evil fare.

Lord, when thou wentest forth, their mighty and dread
 Sovereign and Chief ; their covenanted Head ;
 Rescuing the sons of Jacob from distress ;
 When Thou didst march amidst the wilderness,
 Veiling thy glories in an earthly tent ;
 The solid earth did quake ; the firmament
 Stood shrouded and appall'd ; seeming to weep,
 Blotting the soil with heavy drops and deep
 —Drops of atoning sorrow from above—
 And Sinai's mighty Rock was seen to move,

Bowing his antient hoary form sublime,
Mysterious, rooted in the abyss of time. X

But on Thine heritage, Thou didst diffuse
A gracious shower of heavenly and holy dews ;
Cheering the famish'd hearts forlorn and weary ;
Appointing in the desert parch'd and dreary,
A place of rest, a plenteous habitation
For Thine own flock, Thy chosen congregation—
God gave the word—a mighty multitude
Moved forth at once, with faith and hope endued ;
Invested in the panoply divine ;
Train'd and array'd in saintly discipline ;
—A noble army of Martyrs—forth they went,
That (with the sound and sight, and summons sent)
Kings and embattled hosts in panic haste
Fled headlong—wide apart, disperst and chas'd ;
Enriching humble households with the spoil
Of Heathen pride ; without fatigue or toil,
Sharing at home the gain of godliness.

Long have ye lain in torture and distress,
The furnace of affliction ; soon to rise
Lustrous as gold or silver, with the dies
That wander o'er the changeful Dove and deck
Her silver wings, and gold-enamel'd neck :
Bright, pure, and ever welcome, such as she
Heralds of peace and safety shall ye be—

In the full triumph, Salmon's western height
Shines forth, enrob'd in pure and snowy white

The token of victory—proud Basan stands
 Far eastward, overlooking heathen lands
 With lofty ranges of superb ascent,
 Lordly, majestic, magnificent,
 Sources of health, and living springs of life,
 Each in his region—but forbear the strife
 Ye mighty and haughty Mountains ! be not moved
 Though Sion's hill be chosen and approv'd
 Even as the saintly Sinai was before,
 More honoured, better loved, and cherish'd more—
 Even as at Sinai, there the Lord shall be
 The Lord of Hosts, with might and majesty,
 With fiery ministers, and cars of flame
 Myriads of myriads—with a loud acclaim
 In Heaven and Earth—The Lord is risen on high !
 Destroying Death, leading captivity
 Captive and bound ; large ransom doth he give
 Even for his enemies to be sav'd and live
 To praise and honor Him—Here His throne and place
 Are stablish'd.—Hence He deals His gifts of grace
 In kingly largess—Hence He shall subdue
 The rugged-headed, rude, rebellious crew
 Perverse and hard, marring their shaggy crown
 With His harsh sceptre, bruise'd and beaten down—
 “ Yet once again ” the Lord hath said—“ once more
 “ As from the field of Basan heretofore
 “ Will I lead forth my people ransom-free
 “ Rescued from labor and captivity

" From the overwhelming multitudinous sea
 " To the rich purchase of fair victory
 " Their promis'd land." Thy feet shall print the ground
 With bloody traces—thy familiar hound
 Shall tinge his tongue with carnage.—Pomp and state,
 Praises and Hymns upon Thy triumph wait,
 Conqueror and Lord, and leader of the tribes !
 As holy pure magnific use prescribes.
 First in the march the solemn singers go
 Mounting in even rank, and cadence slow ;
 The thronging Minstrels crowd the rear below ;
 And in the midst, a goodly troop and fair,
 With the light timbrel tost and wav'd in air,
 Are seen ascending on the sacred hill,
 With happy virgin voices pure and shrill.
 Praise ye the Lord in holy congregations,
 Praise ye the Lord aloud among the nations,
 Your kindred Chief, the stream from Jacob's well ;
 The Scion of the root of Israel—

There might the little Benjamin preside
 Their humble early Ruler—or the Pride
 Of princely Judah with his Peers of State,
 Or from remoter Regions, grave and great,
 Councillors, Sages, Rulers, many a one,
 Wise Nepthali, the wealthy Zabulon :
 But he the Lord hath sent thee forth in strength,
 Strengthen O Lord Thy work ; assert at length

Thine own dominion ; what Thy power hath wrought
 Fix and confirm it to fulfilment brought :
 That other Kings and Chiefs may bend the knee,
 Prone and adoring ; suppliant to thee
 With offer'd tribute for Thy temple's sake :
 When in Thy wrath Thou shalt rebuke and break
 The multitude of Spearmen, and the Beast,
 Hideous and huge in loathly bulk increast,
 That haunts the sultry Memphian's River's edge,
 Weltering and battenng in the bristled sedge ;
 (The people of Priests, the formal haughty line,
 That with the clinking silver, glance and shine
 The dull idolaters of Calves and Kine—)
 Then shall the Lords and Chiefs of Egypt stand
 And stretch before thee the submissive hand
 In supplication and surrender due :
 And Ethiopia's Queen shall turn anew,
 To worship in thy precincts ; to behold
 Thy rich array, the pomp of power and gold ;
 And marvels of Thy Wisdom widely told—
 Sing to the Lord, ye realms of Earth, O Sing
 The praises of your King, in Heaven abiding,
 Upon the wheeling spheres in glory riding
 Before all ages, years, or earthly time,
 Eternal and sublime ; He sendeth forth
 An image of his worth ; the Eternal word
 Our delegated Lord, a mighty voice,

NOTES.

Ep. Heb. C 12, v. xviii. " For ye are not come to the *mount* that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness and darkness and tempest, but ye are come unto *Mount Sion* and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and unto an *innumerable company of Angels to the general Assembly and Church of the First born.*" Here we see that St. Paul follows the order of association observable in this Psalm from v. 7 to 11 again (v. 26) in the same chapter he returns to the interpretation of the 8th. v. of the same Psalm, as implying the abolition of the Ceremonial Law.

" Long have ye lain in torture and distress. "

Sensus patet (says Cocceius) si jaceatis in camino in furno in igne *πειρασμου*.

Bidding his Saints rejoice ; proclaim and tell
That here in Israel, the Lord hath placed
His temple and throne, and with His presence graced
This land alone—His power and majesty
Stretches above the sky, but Israel !
Within thy sacred cell, to daunt thy foes ;
What awe does it disclose, what terrors carry,
Enshrin'd and shrouded in thy Sanctuary !
—Chaunt forth in loud accord
The glad triumphant word
Praised be the Lord for ever. Praise the Lord.

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